



Newsletter February 2009

Why We Walk....Our Story

A little over five years ago our son Tobey was diagnosed with mild autism, and like most parents we were surprised and saddened by the diagnosis. I always compare it to waking up in OZ.



I needed to get somewhere to help my son, but no one gave me answers, and there was no yellow brick road to follow. Fortunately, we had great support from our family and friends, and over a six month time period we were able to begin to find answers and best of all, begin to get help for our boy. Along the way we heard about NFAR and about the Race for Autism.

At this point we were about one year into life with autism, and we tentatively asked all of our friends if they would like to join us at the Race for Autism. The response was overwhelming, and we had one of the largest teams. We have participated in the Race every year since then, and our team keeps getting larger and larger. The outpouring of support for our Team Tobey is always amazing, and it always feels like people come out just for Tobey, our magical kid.

So we walk at the San Diego Race for Autism because we love the family atmosphere, and the amazing programs that NFAR brings to the community. We walk because it brings our community of friends and family together for a day. We walk because doing something to give back feels great, and it has a domino effect - everyone who walks goes away with a little bit more awareness, a bit more education, and a great amount of tolerance for these special kids. We walk because it is good for our



COMPASS Family Center Adult Transition Seminars

**Next Seminar -
April 15, 2009**

On January 13, 2009 COMPASS Family Center presented its first Adult Transition Seminar to a crowd of 45 people. This NFAR funded program is the first of two seminars on the Secondary Transition process that is being offered by COMPASS Family Center to parents **FREE of charge.**

According to COMPASS, families often approach the Adult Transition process with little or no information. These seminars were specifically designed to help prepare families who have a son or daughter 14 years or older and are preparing for transition to adulthood.

family to stay involved and to remember we are not alone, that other families face the same struggles, and that they also have the same hopes. We walk to get a better idea of what resources are out there in the community to support our boy. We walk to say thank you to the teachers who work so hard to educate our child and teach him the skills he needs.

But most of all we walk because we love our son Tobey. We think that he is a magical little blessing, and it feels great to have a day that celebrates him for who he is. That is why we walk and why we support NFAR and their contribution towards helping kids and their families with autism.

Jami

Mother and co-Leader Team Tobey



www.RaceforAutism.org

NFAR's 1st Teacher's Networking Forum attracts Educators from across San Diego

The first of its kind in San Diego, the NFAR Teachers Networking Forum held on February 4, 2009 offered educators from around the county a unique opportunity to learn about strategies and programs being implemented by other educators of students with autism.

The Seminar reviews:

- Components of the Transition Plan
- Laws that govern the Transition to Adulthood
- Legal decisions you and your child will need to make during this Process
- Options available to your child

COMPASS Family Center will host another Adult Transition Seminar on April 15, 2009 at USD

For more information or to register for this free seminar,

**please contact:
Sharna Langlais
COMPASS Family Center**

sharna@compassfc.org

Please Join Us!

Saturday, March 28



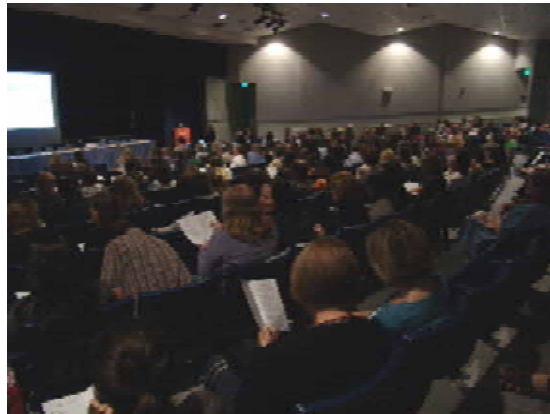


The forum was developed in order to give teachers, parents and other professionals a venue for sharing and for learning about programs and educational techniques currently being used in classrooms and on school campuses for teaching students with the disabilities most common to autism.

Over 200 persons attended the Forum which began with a casual dinner and networking, and was then followed by the presentations. 10News I-Team Investigative Reporter Lauren Reynolds served as Mistress of Ceremonies. Dr. Joe Fulcher, SD Unified School District's Director of Special Education kicked off the speaker series with a warm welcome.

The Forum focused on strategies being used to strengthen communication and social skills, with presentations on Video Modeling techniques, Social Interest Clubs, Life Skills Training, P.A.C.E.S. Support Group for families, PRT Training in the classrooms and more.

NFAR would like to sincerely thank all the presenters, Jenna Sleichter, Bonnie Thomason, Kelly Xitco, Dr. Erin Schwier, Brandi Bolter, Debra Barnett, Jan Clark, Dr. Laura Hall, Dr. Bonnie Kraemer, Jessica Suhrheinrich, Jill Chang, Donna Harper, and Kathleen May as well as Lauren Reynolds, Dr. Joe Fulcher and the attendees and volunteers for helping make this inaugural event a success! We look forward to hosting similar Forums in the future.



Not able to join us?

View the coverage of the Forum by [CNN i-reporter Chris Morrow](#).



Create your Team and Win!

Every team member that joins your team increases your chances to win exclusive concert tickets from our sponsors Sophie 103.7 and KyXy 96.5.

Our first raffle drawing will be **March 1, 2009, to win exclusive tickets** to a Sophie@103.7 sponsored concert.



In addition, the team captain with the largest team also wins an **All inclusive Trip for two to sunny Cabo San Lucas.**



See website for more details

www.RaceforAutism.org

The National Foundation for Autism Research is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization EIN 20-0538863 dedicated to funding innovative treatment programs and options that improve the quality of life for children living with Autism Spectrum Disorders.